

Series II  
Subjects Files,  
1916-1973

Box 13, Folder 6

February 1956 -  
November 1956

0555

5210 Moorland Lane  
Bethesda, Maryland

14 February 1956

Commodore R. W. Bates  
Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

Dear Commodore:

Your letter of 8 February reached me today and your prospective re-write of history or an old battle action left me bewildered and in a cold sweat. It reminded me of President Truman's Memoirs - and just about as accurate. Inasmuch as MacArthur, Byrnes, Baruch, and a few others have had the courage to reply to Truman's "truthful" account, I'll instantly reply to yours.

My copy of the battle account is in my files in my trunk in Coronado, but most of the events of that night are as clear in my mind as if they happened yesterday. This was all gone over with you and your assistants in 1946-47 when I was attending the War College and a prolongation of that account with a twist here and there and reliance on clock times in old Ships Logs at this date appears to me slightly ridiculous. This is doubly bad when I consider that for the past two years I was on duty in Newport and last year both Captain Habecker of the R. P. LEARY and myself were there.

For the action proper, Captain Roland Smoot took our section, as you know, roughly down the center of Surigao Strait for the attack. The Division Commander and Captain Boulware led their respective sections down the flanks.

The exact times are not available and I will not try to guess. Our first section went in column and we stayed in column. At no time was I very far off the stern of the LEARY. Distance was approximately 300 yards.

To diverge a bit inasmuch as your "study" is seemingly based strictly on clock times from three different clocks, I'd like to repeat that this was one helluva dark night, the average age of my crew was less than 21, we knew what we were doing, but there was a tenseness in the air and quartermasters weren't taking too much time to keep a flashlight on to get pinpoint accuracy - not when you are closing an unfriendly Japanese battleship at night. Clock times could vary by a minute or two between ships. A plot strictly on separate ship's clock times at this stage of the game is, to me, very ill advised, if this study and analysis is for historical accuracy.

In our approach toward the Japs we stayed in column, being on course, as I remember it, about 190 - 195°. Most of the time. Actually we just stayed in column - no communications were necessary. When we were at a position that Captain Smoot considered suitable, he did a column right to roughly 270°. Where the LEARY was in distance in relation to the NEWCOMB

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I can't say. The NEWCOMB was close enough to us to be barely visible ahead on our radar and I'll estimate our distance from the LEARY as being very close to 300 yards astern.

Shortly after our column right to 270°T shells began to land astern of the LEARY and ahead of and on both bows of the A. W. GRANT. Some were so close they sounded like freight trains and one felt you could almost reach out and touch them. This is still as vivid as if it happened an hour ago. At that time I still thought they were all JAP shells.

It was in this order of battle, close column, speed roughly 25 kts, paralleling the Japs, that Captain Smoot ordered us to fire a half salvo (5 torpedoes). We fired our half salvo from the Director (I rushed back to check bearings on the Torpedo Director as we fired) ~~then~~ Captain Smoot gave a ship's turn away to starboard 90°. I was on the forward part of the bridge, saw the track of the LEARY dead ahead, and started our turn with them.

At this time we were badly hit and lost steering forward, but I told steering aft to take over and come to north. The man aft acknowledged and complied, altho we lost communications with him immediately thereafter. I later commended this lad for a terrific alert job when all he knew was that, despite all hell breaking loose, he had an order to carry out. And did!

The first Jap shell, as far as we could determine hit our port torpedo director. Steam began coming out of our stack and almost in the same breath word was passed to fire the other half salvo. This was done at my order to quickly get rid of vast destructive potential. An alert Chief Torpedoman on the mounts had kept them trained on the target - following Plot - and kicked out all five manually.

As we headed north, taking on water, a small fire burning at Mt. #41, steam and smoke pouring out of #1 stack, and rapidly losing all power we slowly came to a halt on that heading. How far we traveled I don't know but #4 boiler kept up steam to the after engine room for an appreciable period of 5-10 minutes - or more.

The track of the shells from the U. S. Cruiser that hit us clearly showed that we were in a starboard turn when hit. All the U. S. shells entered at an angle leading from forward aft. There were many straddles on the bow before the first shell hit the ship. The straddles occurred when we were on course 270°T. The "hits" started as we commenced our turn away from the Japs.

After commencing our ship's turn to the right 90°, being hit, and ordering Steering Aft to steady on north, I cannot track the movements of the A. W. GRANT. We gradually slowed down and fought like hell to keep afloat. Thanks to some ONE far bigger than any of us, we did.

With all due respect to the LEARY, I feel that if they would write their own damn battle report and not that for everyone else, we might be better off. Captain Smoot had us all in a perfect position to fire - in close column and topping the Japs as they were turning to parallel us. If the LEARY didn't fire his half salvo, then he has only himself to blame - not anyone else.

As you undoubtedly remember, traveling close order at night - darkened ship - is tricky business. 300 yards is well within the "grass" of a 1944 radar screen. By radar neither of us knew where the other one was. Being astern I could follow him and closely. By the width and turbulence of the wake, and a frequent glimpse of his stern, I could follow him carefully.

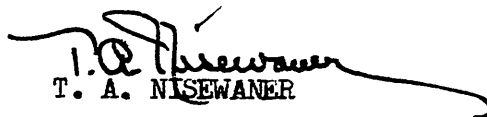
I am amazed, at this stage, to learn that the LEARY was devoting so damn much time to the ship astern when their attention might reasonably be expected to be on the NEWCOMB ahead. Because of the fact that I knew at all times (until we commenced our turn away) exactly where the LEARY was and because ships didn't show up at 300 yards on 1944 radar screens, I fully doubt the LEARY's statements in their Report about where they thought we were. You might ask yourself or any seasoned destroyer skipper in a seasoned division how much time he could devote to the ship astern in a close order, high speed, darkened ship attack on "live" targets at night.

I am thoroughly puzzled about the LEARY's statement that their initial torpedoes passed astern the A. W. GRANT. They must have really pulled that one out of "thin air".

With the exception of these remarks I feel your analysis and your map of the track is reasonably accurate.

Former LT B.B.V. Lyon, USNR, now living at 2721 Jackson Street, San Francisco, California, might also assist in dispelling some of these inaccuracies about the A. W. GRANT wandering off by itself - based on the report of a ship ahead in a close order attack at night. He was O.O.D. on the A. W. GRANT that night and probably remembers as well as anyone how close we stayed on their "tail" in column.

Sincerely yours,

  
T. A. NISEWANER

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Navy 115, Box 55  
c/o Fleet Post Office  
New York, N. Y.

**FLEET TRAINING GROUP, GUANTANAMO BAY**  
**TRAINING COMMAND, U. S. ATLANTIC FLEET**

ComFltTraGrp.  
Gtmo/  
Serial:

23 February 1956

Dear Commodore Bates:

I am making a preliminary reply to your letter of 9 January which will be little more than acknowledgement.

As you recall personal diaries were not permitted during the war, a rule with which I complied, somewhat to my later regret. In an effort to give you the best answer to your questions I have sent a copy of your letter to my executive officer at the time I commanded the RICHARD P. LEARY with a request that he give me the best recollection of the events in question. Upon receipt of his reply I will write you again in an effort to give you the information you desire. I presume the ship's log and war diary have been studied in connection with your evaluation.

Respectfully yours,

*F. S. Habecker*  
F. S. HABECKER

Commodore R. W. BATES, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

0559

Navy 115, Box 55  
c/o Fleet Post Office  
New York, N. Y.

**FLEET TRAINING GROUP, GUANTANAMO BAY**  
TRAINING COMMAND, U. S. ATLANTIC FLEET

ComFltTraGrp.  
Gtmo/  
Serial:

17 April 1956

Dear Admiral Bates:

In reply to your letter of 3 April, I am afraid I can not be too helpful in view of a possible faulty memory combined with the many things happening at the time in question. Never-the-less, I will give my rough impressions as I attempt to recall these events.

The tracks of the RICHARD P. LEARY and GRANT coincide rather closely with my recollections of the situation, although I can't honestly remember that the tracks of the RICHARD P. LEARY and NEWCOMB were as offset as they appear to be at the western end of the tracks, although the diagram may be quite accurate. I was surprised to see the distances shown between the NEWCOMB and R.P. LEARY because although I do not question that they were sometimes greater than 700 yards, I would not have estimated now that they had gotten to 2000 yards at the times noted. Actually I am inclined to think that your coordinated plot, in the absence of anything better, probably gives as accurate a picture as can be expected.

Your sketches are enclosed herewith and I am only sorry that I have not been able to be of greater help to you.

Very respectfully,

*F. S. Habecker*  
F. S. HABECKER

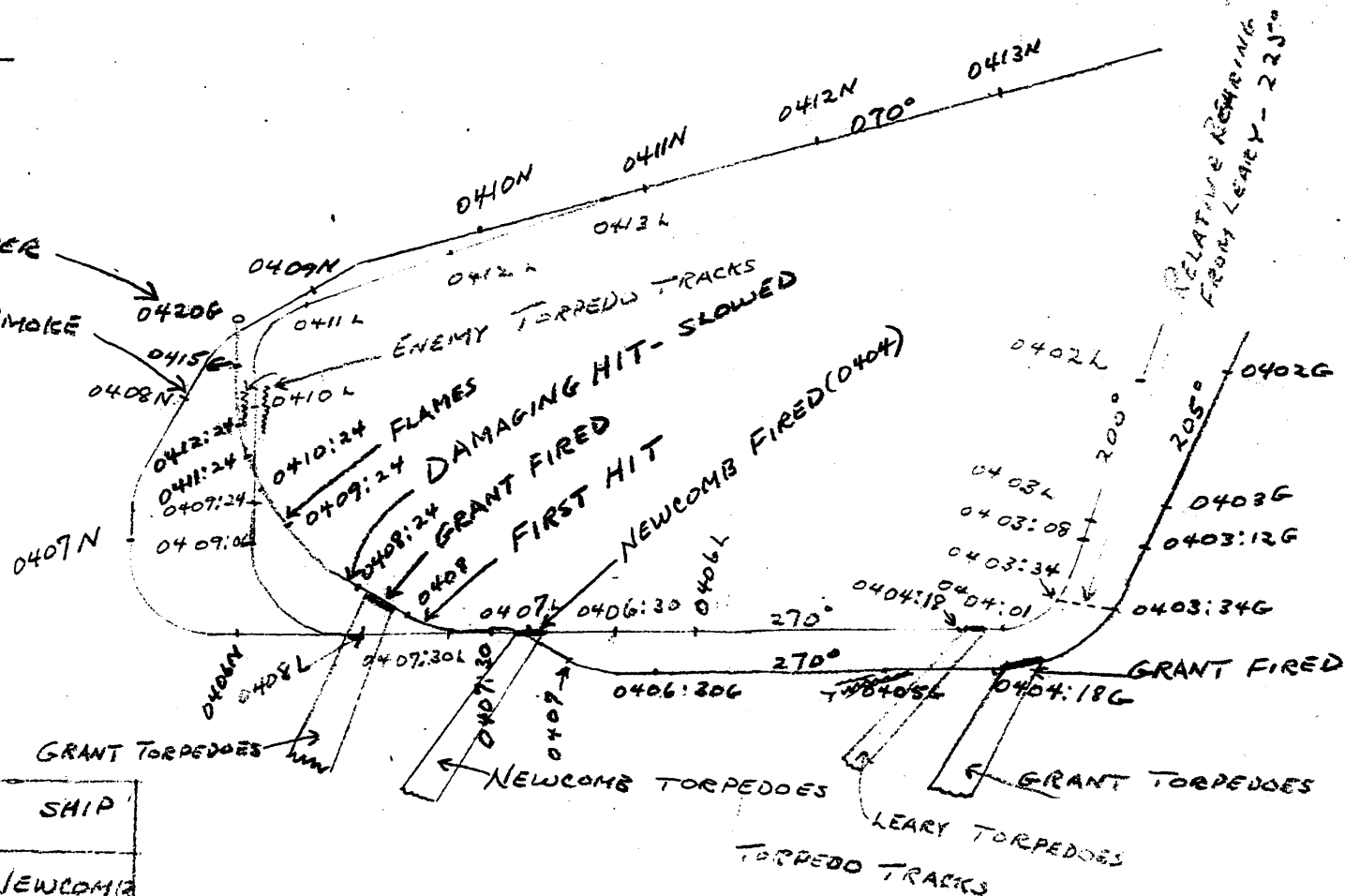
Rear Admiral R.W. Bates, USN  
World War II Battle Evaluation Group  
Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

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GRANT TRACK

GRANT DEAD IN WATER

NEWCOMB COMMENCED SMOKE



TIME	SHIP	DISTANCE ASTERN	SHIP
0404	LEARY	2600	NEWCOMB
0404:18	GRANT	300	LEARY
0413	LEARY	2000	NEWCOMB
0413	LEARY	2300	NEWCOMB
0413	GRANT	2300	LEARY
0413	GRANT	4600	NEWCOMB

SCALE - 1" = 1000 yds.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO  
Op-533/fa  
Pers

26 April 1956

Commodore R. W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

Dear Commodore:

If you will forward to us the completed work on Volume III of the Battle for Leyte Gulf, we shall get started on the preparation of the required weather picture. We shall use the same procedures as we employed in the preparation of Volume II.

For the same reasons which applied to Volume II, we would like to have:

- a. The diagrams or charts on which to place the weather picture (Applicable times and area boundaries for which weather data are desired should be indicated on these diagrams or charts).
- b. A copy of the book, or manuscript, with the weather entries tabbed.

As you well realize, every bit of weather information which you possess, pertaining to the days involved, will be helpful to us. It is planned to integrate your weather information with whatever observational data is available in the files of the National Weather Records Center.

It is true that I am making ready to retire on 1 July. Present plans call for a journey to Florida to look for an appealing spot to establish a home. After that, some travel may be in order.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely,

*J. C. S. McKillip*  
J. C. S. McKILLIP  
Captain, USN

0562



30 April 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

I have become a little bit confused since we have been corresponding back and forth between the offices of the Naval History Division and the Naval Intelligence Division.

The reason for this confusion is that the U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas Weekly Intelligence (Volume I, Number 43, of 7 May 1945) indicated that ONI had certain records of the Japanese Destroyer Division THIRTY-ONE.

In answer to my letter the Naval History Division informed us that only two documents of those requested by the Naval War College were available for translation (Action Report OKINAMI and War Diary DESDIV 31).

Therefore, we in turn requested that these two documents be so translated, and I presume that you are now working on them.

I have also written to the Naval Intelligence Division on this matter (because the Naval History Division didn't have the documents), but so far at least they have not found them.

Can you tell me whether you have located these documents in your Japanese research work at the Naval Archives, or in the photographing of the documents for Op-29? Or do we have to drop this?

I hope to be down in Washington presently (probably in a couple of weeks) at which time I will look into this matter thoroughly.

With best regards, and with hopes that you and your husband are doing well, and that the baby is growing in health and strength, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
c/o Mr. Roger Pineau  
Room 1218 OpNav  
Main Navy,  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0563

Ref

MONTEREY PENINSULA COUNTRY CLUB  
PEBBLE BEACH, CALIFORNIA

P.O. Box 192,

27 May 1956.

Dear Rafe -

This is just a brief note to acknowledge your very interesting letter of 16 May. You certainly have dug up some important things in your delving below the surface, and I agree with your conclusions about "the twin purposes of diversion and command," as expressed in your letter.

What you found out about the original difference in plans of the Japanese Army and the U.S. is very important, but it seems to me that a change in the Army on 20 October was certainly made very late. Have you had an opportunity to what our own Army people in Washington have found out about this? If they do not already know about it, they ought to be told. If you do not expect to visit Washington soon, perhaps John Heffernan may be in a position to do a little investigating for you.

Margaret and I spent most of last week enjoying Yosemite at its wonderful best - my first visit, but Margaret's second. We took in the Mariposa Grove and Friant Dam (north of

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Fresno) on our way home Friday.

I certainly hope you will be out this way during the summer. We shall be here all summer, as Edward's two children will fly out here about the middle of June, to be with us until school starts again in September. Edward is on duty in the Pentagon, and Washington in the summer is no place for growing children to stay if they do not have to. We had them for a month last summer while Edward and Josephine drove east from Coronado. I wish we had room to put you up when you come this way, but the two grandchildren take over our guest facilities. At any rate, good food is available at several spots in the Del Monte Forest, and we must have plenty of time to talk over many things of mutual interest. I almost forgot to say that Swede Overesch has just bought a house in Pebble Beach, but they will not take up residence for another year yet. We are very happy to have them coming.

Sincerely yours,  
Raymond Spruance



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

INC INF 56  
IN REPLY REFER TO  
Op-54/kh  
14 June 1956

Dear Commodore:

First, let me thank you for stopping in to see me. It was a privilege to hear you discuss your interesting and valuable work. The Navy is indeed fortunate to have your continuing services in this field.

Each day I become more impressed with the Navy's need for highest quality decision-making-ability in its senior officers, and although I am a poor one to speak on the subject, having simply neglected to study the analysis of the battles which you have produced to date, I am impressed by the eminence of your position in bringing to the attention of naval officer, in general terms, the character and quality of the decisions made in World War II insofar as they can be summed up. I fear naval officers as a group are not very intellectual, nor are they analytically studious, and therefore believe that some short, hard and straightforward lessons, reflecting your detailed and thoughtful studies, if set out apart from the battle studies themselves, would invite attention in a dramatic way. We are always preoccupied with today's business and are looking for short cuts to improve our reasoning. This in essence would be such a short cut in a small package, and would receive a warm welcome even if controversial. I feel sure they would be read and would be stimulating. This is only a thought, and should ever any doubt arise about the propriety of your doing such, I would quickly counter with the statement that you are one of the very, very few officers who are active in the thinking business per se in the Navy today.

Please don't believe by the foregoing that I am dodging the problems of your personnel, in which you are so rightfully interested. To the contrary, we have a solution to the detachment of Zirkle which meets the agreement to leave him with you until October, and which I would like to propose for your consideration. There is attached a brief on a young Commander by the name of Huff, who can be made available to report around the end of August. We have discussed him with Captain Harmer in BUPERS, who joins us in the belief that he has a fine background for your purposes. I do not personally know him however.

Concerning Zirkle's new duty, he is urgently needed in the staff of CINCLANT as Assistant Special Weapons Officer, Operations. We appreciate your recommendations, and would like to have considered him for shipboard duty at this time, but consider the staff assignment of higher priority. On conclusion of two years duty there, he will still be eligible for shipboard assignment to fill out three years sea duty. I trust this is acceptable to you and him.

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You are aware of my interest in Howie Cole and I do hope you are finding him adaptable to your work. He has some rough edges for it, but learns quickly and is by nature enthusiastic. To be under your tutelage is a wonderful opportunity for him since it fills a gap in his training and preparation for higher responsibilities, and certainly should serve to smooth him out. Please tell him Betsey and I are looking forward to seeing him when he gets his flight time in down this way.

Connie Moore is the name of the fine gentleman which slipped my mind. We think he is one of the finest Newport citizens and hold him in high respect.

I shall look forward to assisting you in any way, not only because I appreciate your generous estimate of my abilities; more, I genuinely value you and your fine contributions to the service.

Very respectfully,



A. R. MATTER  
CAPTAIN, USN

Commodore R. W. Bates, USN  
Head, WWII Battle Evaluation Group  
U. S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

Encl:

0567

COMMANDER ALVIN D. HUFF, 165436/1310, NA '43

3/46 - 4/48	VF-81, USS PRINCETON	Admin & Ops Off.
4/48 - 5/49	CFWC Staff	Flag Secretary
6/49 - 7/50	FASRON-7	XO/Ops
8/50 - 7/52	NABT Pensacola	Flt. Instructor
8/52 - 6/53	Naval War College	Student
7/53 - 11/53	USS FDR	Air Ops Off.
11/53 - 7/55	COMCARDIV-2 Staff	Air Ops Off.
8/55 - Present	VC-12 (FORRESTAL Det)	Ops/Team Ldr.

Enclosure

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO  
OP-541/so

LT 270  
5 ESSUMS  
8/1/56

9 July 1956

Dear Commodore:

I have investigated the possibility of Commanders ADAMS or RIORDAN relieving Commander ZIRKLE in October and regret that I must inform you that neither can be considered available. Commander ADAMS reported for duty in the staff of the Commander, Second Fleet in February of this year. Commander RIORDAN reported to VW-15 for duty in October, 1955. The detachment of either of these officers this fall would have too adverse an effect upon the necessary continuity of effort in the activities concerned.

In addition to the nomination of Commander BELCHER, which you hold, may I suggest Commanders SESSUMS and GODDING for your consideration. Briefs of their service backgrounds are attached for your information. Commander GODDING is under orders to the N.A.S. Chincoteague but can be diverted to your group if you so desire.

In the event none of these three officers meet your requirements, may I again suggest the possibility of Commander ZIRKLE extending until next June. Our policy concerning officers of his rank permits this, particularly in instances where officers are filling key billets. CINCLANTFLT has reiterated his desire to fill the vacant billet in his staff as soon as possible. In keeping with this request we are endeavoring to assign an officer who might be able to report on an earlier date than Commander ZIRKLE. Should we be successful in this, the immediate requirement for Commander ZIRKLE's services would no longer exist and his detachment date can be adjusted to your convenience.

Very respectfully,

A. R. MATTER  
Captain, USN

Commodore R.W. Bates USN  
U.S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

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CDR Roy S. BELCHER, Jr., 86122/1310

6/41 - 9/43	Corpus Christi	Instructor
9/43 - 10/44	VC-15 (A/S)	XO
10/44 - 5/45	VC-15	CO
5/45 - 1/48	VT-3	CO
2/48 - 12/48	GLS Monterey	Student
1/49 - 7/50	Pensacola	OIC BTU-3
7/50 - 1/51	AFSC Norfolk	Student
1/51 - 7/52	USS MINDORO	Air Officer
8/52 - 6/53	NWC Newport	Student - C & S Course
6/53 - 6/55	NATTU Olathe	XO
7/55 - Present	VC-12	XO

*Date of rank: July 1, 1951*

*Education: Kansas State Col, BS*

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SESSUMS, Walter M. 98564/1310

SEA

11/42 - 4/44 VS-58 - XO, CO  
1/45 - 3/45 SOSU-3 - CL Unit  
4/45 - 2/46 CL COLUMBIA - SeNav  
5/46 -10/46 FAS-201 - CO  
11/46 - 4/47 PINE ISLAND - Asst Air Off  
12/50 - 7/52 StfComAirPac - Opers.Off  
8/55 - pres HS-1 - CO

SHORE

1/41 - 7/41 Pensacola - AvCad  
8/41 -10/41 Pensacola - VO-VS Instr.  
11/41 - 9/42 New Orleans - Flt.Instr.  
6/44 -12/44 Jax - VSB Flt Instr.  
6/47 - 9/47 Whiting Fld - VPHL OpsTrng  
9/47 - 7/48 Whiting Fld - Opers.Off  
8/48 - 1/50 Pt Mugu - Proj.Test  
2/50 -12/50 Monterey -GenLineSch - student  
7/52 - 7/55 Newport - NWC - student and staff

LECS

Date of Rank 7-23-51

Education - 3 years Tulane Univ. - Mech.Engineering

GenLineSchool - NWC (C&S and NW I)

Total Navy Flight Hours as of 16 May 56 - 3550 Hours

SNB(400),H04S(50),HSS(100)

1954 - Crs. Com Dept

1955 C&S Dept

GODDING, Talmay F., 86008/1310

SEA

8/43 - 2/44 VF-18 - Opers Off  
3/44 -10/44 VOF-3 - Opers Off  
10/44 -12/45 VBF-89 - Opers Off  
6/48 -11/49 FASRON-4 - XO  
12/52 - 1/54 VS-22 - CO  
1/54 - pres NS Roosevelt Rds - XO

SHORE

6/40 - 6/41 Pensacola - AvCad  
6/41 - 4/43 Corpus - Instructor  
1/46 - 6/47 Corpus - Asst Trng Off  
6/47 - 6/48 GLS - student  
12/49 - 8/51 Pensacola - Asst OinC  
8/51 - 6/52 NWC - student C&S  
9/51 -12/51 FAETULANT - student

Date of Rank - 1-1-52

Education - BS Univ. of New Mexico - Physical Education

GenLineSchool - NWC (C&S)

Total Navy Flight Hours as of 2 Sept 55 - 3635 Hours

F4U(50),F6F(70),JRB(153),AF(360),R4D(35),SNJ(25)

0571



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO  
18 July 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR CAPTAIN MATTER

Subj: LCDR Leon B. Blair, USN, 129674/1310

1. Pursuant to your request, the following educational and professional summary is submitted:

a. Educational background

Bachelor of Arts degree, Texas Technological College, with major field of study being Political Science.

Law School, University of Texas. Course not completed and degree not taken by reason of entrance in Navy; however, certified in accordance with Article 27b, UCMJ as trial counsel/defense counsel.

Master of Arts Degree with highest standing awarded by Rice Institute, 1949, with field of graduate study being Military and Naval History. Research for graduate study was done under the supervision of Dr. Hardin Craig who is recognized as one of the academic world's eminent historians.

General Line School, Newport, 1949-50.

Completely fluent in French language and fair command of German.

b. Naval Experience

Patrol Plane Commander with 3600 hours, mostly in Patrol Planes.

Administrative and staff experience, includes 2 years (1949-51) as Editorial Officer, VX-1, charged with preparation of technical reports; one year in Op-05 in a P10 billet, during which I wrote and served as technical advisor for the Navy P10 film, "The Sixth Fleet." This movie was based upon my article, "Mediterranean Geopolitics," published in Naval Institute Proceedings, reprints of which are currently used at NWC as reference material. In addition, I assisted in the writing and technical direction (in the aviation aspects) of the television series, "Victory at Sea."

Author of some dozen published magazine articles on military and historical subjects.

Presently attached to MAAG France as Aviation Technical Officer.

*Leon B. Blair*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO  
Op-54/kh  
19 July 1956

Dear Commodore:

The officer whose background I am attaching came in to see me about the possibility of an assignment to the staff of the War College, and frankly, I was quite impressed by the honesty of his approach and his background, even though it does not contain instruction at a war college.

His is a peculiar case, having been passed over last year for commander, the reason being that he antagonized certain people by accepting defense counsel for the officer who got himself in trouble over the now famous Key West Navy Relief Show. He does not expect to be selected this year and therefore is planning to retire on 20 years and pursue a career as a naval historian.

I am not proposing him as a relief for Commander Zirkle as such, however, he might be so considered. I also realize he lacks broad operating and tactical experience. He could be made available this fall.

I hope your trip to the west coast worked out successfully.

Very respectfully,

A. R. MATTER  
CAPTAIN, USN

Commodore R. W. Bates, USN  
U. S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

Encl:

0573

NAVAL SPEEDLETTER

X

UNCLASSIFIED

PERS-B2133-mc-9

3 AUGUST 1956

COMMANDING OFFICER  
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

TRF L J BAERINGFR 244 30 76 YNL YN-2501- USN TO REPT PRIOR 0800  
9 NOV 56 TO COM NTC BAIN MD FOR 14 WKS TRMINS NAVSCOL YN/B CIGWN  
12 NOV 56 FURASFRS X OBLISFRV 18 X TAUTIBUFFERSMAN C/5310 WHAP  
C/5317/2/B X DELREP 9 NOV 56 X PCS 01657 X

R. S. LEWELLEN  
BY DIRECTION

COM NTC BAIN MD  
CO SSC NTC BAIN MD  
PERS B2114

CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
(ATTN: PERS B2133)  
NAVY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

UNCLASSIFIED

0574



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

10 August 1956

Dear Commodore:

This is in further reply to your letter of 31 July 1956 to Captain Davis.

I am enclosing a copy of a new set of orders for BAERINGER YN1, USN. As you requested, we are assigning him to the YN Class "B" School, class convening in November. He will be reassigned to the Fleet by BuPers upon completion of schooling as it was unfair to USS WILHOITE (DER 397) to have her charged with him for a considerable period without benefit of his services.

We are attempting at present to locate a suitable first class yeoman for you. However, it is difficult to find an outstanding man nowadays who is qualified in shorthand, as most yeoman are now using the stenomask method of taking dictation. The task is complicated by the fact it is often not apparent from the record or job code whether the man is qualified in shorthand or stenomask. Would an outstanding man qualified in stenomask be satisfactory?

We will continue to screen every request received from yeoman for duty in that area, and hope to find a suitable man in the near future. This man will be ordered to report to the War College in October to allow sufficient time to be checked out in his duties prior to detachment of BAERINGER.

I hope these arrangements meet with your approval. With best wishes I remain

Very respectfully

I. S. HARTMAN

Commodore R. W. BATES, USN  
U.S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

0575

C-O-P-Y

SMITH/VOISINE

PERS B2115 MV 8

G-825

42865

A A CICO LCDR USN

24 August 1956

241308Z

BUPERS

COMDESRON 16

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE NWPT  
COMONE  
COMPRNC  
COMSERVLANT  
COMDESLANT

URSPDLTR SER 307 OF 6 AUG 56 NOTAL X MYLTR PERS B2115 ET 91 OF 25 JUL 56  
REF TRF NORMSHOR HENRY WOOD SUTPHIN 258 27 88 YNCA YN 2501 16 USN DUSIGN  
COMPRNC CANCELLED X OBLISERV 12 TRF SUTPHIN ON OR ABOUT 1 DEC 56 TO US NAVAL  
WAR COLLEGE NWPT DUSODA COMONE NORMSHOR ACD BUPERSINST 1306PT20C X DELREP  
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C-O-P-Y

0576



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

106 INF  
56

IN REPLY REFER TO

27 August 1956

My Dear Commodore:

I am enclosing a copy of orders we have issued to Henry W. SUTPHIN YNC, now serving with Commander Destroyer Squadron 16. SUTPHIN is a qualified stenographer (shorthand) and should fit your requirements. I have reviewed his record, which indicates he is a high type of petty officer, intelligent and energetic.

Because you have stated that personnel reinforcements there have eased the pressing need for another man, and because the Commander, Destroyer Squadron 16 asked that SUTPHIN not be detached earlier, we are ordering SUTPHIN transferred in December. I hope this will be satisfactory.

With warmest regards I am,

Very respectfully,

  
I. S. HARTMAN

Commodore R. W. BATES, USN  
U. S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

0577

30 August 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

I have now returned to the Japanese side and am working on October 22nd. I have immediately encountered a problem which has never been settled in anyone's mind, either here or in the writings which I have observed.

This problem relates to the operations of the SECOND Striking Force. If you will recollect, a great argument arose between Commander SW Area Force and the Army and Commander SECOND Striking Force over the possible employment of the SECOND Striking Force. Both Commander SECOND Striking Force and Commander SW Area Force considered that the SECOND Striking Force should not be employed in the counterlanding operations but should, instead, be employed in the penetration operations through Surigao Strait.

I have been unable to find any dispatches from the Imperial General Headquarters (Navy Section) wherein this matter was resolved, nor have I found any messages from CinC Combined Fleet on the matter.

I know that on October 22nd, at 2000, Commander SECOND Striking Force sent out a Top Secret dispatch announcing that "SECOND Striking Force (CRUDIV 21, DESRON 1) will penetrate through SURIGAO Strait behind the THIRD Section, FIRST Striking Force," and giving the schedule of movements. I also know that Commander Mori, in the "Action Summary SECOND Striking Force" which was included in the GHQ, FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations Southwest Pacific Area (Item 22, Footlocker 5 of 10, SWPA Series, Vol. II), has commented on this matter to a degree. On Page 2 of your translation as received by this office, Commander Mori says, under Item (c), that, "In the afternoon of 21 Oct (?), an order was received from CinC Combined Fleet to the effect that, 'Cdr, Southwest Area Fleet will direct 2YB to penetrate into LEYTE Gulf from south of SURIGAO Strait and to cooperate with 1YB'". Here is a flat statement of having received this order that I am seeking. It seems clear, from our analysis, that the date of this order, instead of being October 21st, was more likely October 22nd.

I wonder if it would be possible for you to find this order? It is quite important in my mind because there is considerable question as to the correctness of the Japanese decision to send the SECOND Striking Force into Surigao Strait behind the THIRD Section rather than incorporated therein. Commander Mori, in this same translation, points out that, in the

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30 August 1956

penetration plan which they had drawn up,"after weighing such factors in a localized night action in restricted and unknown enemy waters would only result in a melee with little prospects of success, our inadequate strength, the time of sunrise, etc., it was decided that this force should penetrate at 0600, 25 Oct on the heels of the THIRD Section."

All of the above shows that (a) an order was issued from CinC Combined Fleet, who presumably obtained the word from Imperial General Headquarters (Navy Section), (b) this order was issued on October 22nd, and (c) the SECOND Striking Force was to operate independently of the THIRD Section, but on its heels in such a way as to be able to take any advantage of any success of the THIRD Section.

Outside of this, how are you? I was in Washington the other day, but I didn't even get over to see Mr. Pineau. It was too bad. However, I think I will be down there presently relative to other matters connected with my office, at which time I will try and contact you.

With best regards to you and yours, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
c/o Mr. Roger Pineau  
Main Navy  
Room 1218 OPNAV  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0579

7 September 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

There is a dispatch, located in "Operations of CRUDIV 16, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744, Page 12", from COMCRUDIV 16 to Commander SW Area Fleet, etc. and which reads to this effect:

"Top Secret Dispatch 221239:

1. This unit (AOBA, KINU, URANAMI) will reach Manila Bay Entrance at about 0800 23 Oct. Expect to depart MANILA 2400 24 Oct. (Required Amount of Fuel, 1500 tons.)
2. Request your consideration of attachment of 3 destroyers and 2 subchasers to this unit for carrying out transport operation." (Radio)

Paragraph 1 of this dispatch does not make sense and I would be interested in knowing whether the sentence, "expect to depart MANILA 2400 24 Oct." should not really say, "expect to depart MANILA 2400 23 Oct."?

If the date were actually October 24th, that would mean that COMCRUDIV 16 would be maneuvering off Manila when, as a matter of fact, he was supposed to be at Cagayan by the evening of the 24th. (Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 221320)

Another question has arisen regarding this same dispatch; paragraph 2 refers to the "attachment of 3 destroyers and 2 subchasers to this unit for carrying out transport operation". Why COMCRUDIV 16 was asking that these destroyers be assigned to him is not known, but it seems likely that it was mostly for antisubmarine duty. In other words, the words "transport operation" might otherwise be translated something like "for escort duty" as subchasers and destroyers could do this well. Could this suggested translation be correct?

With hopes that this isn't asking too much and with hopes that you will be able to assist me in this matter, I am, as ever,

Very Sincerely Yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
c/o Mr. Roger Pineau

0580



WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

13 September 1956

Dear Rafe,

Thank you for your letter of 24 August.

I, too, enjoyed our visit when you were here recently. Thank you for your kind wishes in regard to Jean's health, also. It has been a difficult time.

We appreciate your interest in Captain Gimber. I assure you that we have not forgotten him, but since it was decided that he would remain on your staff an additional year - until the summer of 1957 - it is still much too early to make any commitment as to his next assignment. It will be well after the first of the year before active work on next summer's slates is begun and the pieces of the jigsaw start falling into place. At the present time he is slated to command the General Randall (TAP-115), but events may well compel a change of slate.

I await your forthcoming letter concerning Chief Trembath, and I will forward the answers on Trembath shortly after receiving it.

Warm regards.

Sincerely,

H. A. YEAGER

Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy

Rear Admiral R. W. Bates, U. S. Navy (Ret.)  
U. S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

0581

13 September 1956

Dear Hartman:

Thank you very much for your orders in reference to Henry W. Sutphin, YNC, now serving with DesRon 16. I am happy to have him, but, of course, he is arriving late and Baerlinger will be detached long before Sutphin arrives. I realize that you are under heavy pressure there and that it is extremely difficult to find people of consequence. Therefore, I can only hope that Sutphin is the man that you feel he is. In my experience, however, the records of the Department as regards top yeomen are very inconclusive; in fact, the warrant officer in charge of them told me that it was almost impossible to discern the qualities of anyone from the records submitted and now in the Department. I suppose that is the reason you have developed your new system of evaluation of performance which resembles the system employed in the evaluation of officers. With this, you may have better luck.

I am not blaming the commanding officers for these poor records because the old form did not lend itself too well to marking anyone due to the fact that a "passing mark" seemed to be about 3.5 to 3.8.

I haven't submitted anything as yet regarding Trembath because I don't want it acted on until I get down there. However, you will presently receive an official request to retain him. I spoke about this with Admiral Yeager. He said he understood my problem and would approve of anything that "you" recommended. I told Captain Davis about this because he is the "boss" of your section, and, since both of you understand my problems, I look forward to happy results.

In connection with Trembath, I think you should know that I have two Captains, two Commanders, one ~~SMC~~, and three yeomen, in this office at the present time. I have just recently lost one Commander, will lose another one next month, will shortly lose two yeomen. Of course, I am receiving replacements for these departed assistants, but the replacements cannot learn this job overnight. In the case of an officer, it is many months before he is qualified in our way; in the case of an enlisted man, the time varies because of personal qualifications--some are smart enough to be used in research, others are simply yeomen. I have

0582

13 September 1956

repeatedly explained to your section that we do not want "just yeomen". We need more than that. Our enlisted staff must be heading toward officer calibre, because the research work is so great, the documents to be searched so voluminous, that everybody has a part to play.

Trembath is a very valuable assistant. Any officer who has been in this section would clearly explain that to you. If I should lose him, I am afraid that my work would be slowed down tremendously.

Finally, I want to say that I feel rather certain that when my people are detached from this office they are much more able than they were when they arrived, no matter how many years of service they have had. I say this advisedly, because my personnel have received many encomiums after they have been in their new assignments for a time. The last one was my chief yeoman, Burton, who said that his work in the fleet, which had heretofore been difficult, was now quite easy, and he felt that his association with this office had changed him "from a boy into a man". This remark indicates the high character that Burton displayed while here.

With best regards, and with many thanks for your interest, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Captain I.S. Hartman, U.S. Navy  
Bureau of Naval Personnel  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0583

24 September 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

In studying the operations of the Commander SECOND Striking Force on October 22nd, it seems clear, from COMDESRON ONE's War Diary (WDC Document 161638, NA 11744), that a SECOND Striking Force Operation Order No. FIVE, which was a directive for penetration by the SECOND Striking Force into Leyte Gulf, was issued.

The remarkable thing about our notes thereon is this: Captain Rochefort, who you will recollect was our Japanese language officer, in his translation, said that this operation order was a written order, whereas you, or Mr. Kawakami, referred to it as a radio dispatch.

I should like very much to obtain this Operation Order No. 5 and I am wondering if, in your papers, you have by any chance encountered it recently. I am interested, of course, in (a) what these penetration operations were to consist of, and (b) if this operation order was in fact a written order or a radio dispatch.

The confusing point here is that COMDESRON ONE, from whom the information concerning the above radio dispatch or written order was obtained, was in the ABUKUMA with Commander SECOND Striking Force. Therefore, it would seem most likely that this was either a written order or a visual signal.

New subject. I should also like to invite your attention to Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 222000, found in Commander Main Force's Action Report (WDC Document 161005, NA 11744). This dispatch has no "To:", so we don't know to whom it was sent, but it does point out that the SECOND Striking Force was to arrive off the entrance to Surigao Strait (which is Binit Point) at 0600 October 25th. Since Commander THIRD Section was to arrive off Binit Point at 0100 (Commander THIRD Section 221155), it can be readily seen from this that Commander SECOND Striking Force visualized arriving five hours after the THIRD Section.

It would be wonderful if you could determine whether there was any peculiar meaning to be given to Commander SECOND Striking Force's "entrance to Surigao Strait". In other words, could he have meant thereby somewhere higher up the strait? This, of course, is highly important because, if correct, it is another proof that Commander SECOND Striking Force did not plan to follow the THIRD Section very closely.

0584

24 September 1956

Outside of this, I hope things are well with you.

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0585

24 September 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

Here is another one.

I would appreciate it if you would look at the "Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ, FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series, Volume II)", and translate what is reported under October 22nd (right hand column, page 6).

In your translation, you say, "Enemy broadcast /T.N. - Omitted as unessential since it concerns US landing forces./"

It would be interesting at this point to know what the Japanese had to say about the Allied landing forces and I think, therefore, that this might well be translated.

For your information, Captain H.M.S. Gimber (of this office) will be down in Washington during the period 1 - 3 October 1956. He doesn't have anything in particular for you, but would like to take a look at such a trusty and able assistant. He will call you so that he can make an appointment.

Outside of that, how are you and how is your young heiress?

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0586



27 September 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

Some time ago, in April 1954, to be exact, you sent us a translation on the SHO operation by Vice Admiral Ryunosuke Kusaka, CofS Combined Fleet, Manichi Shimbun Sha, Japan, April 5th, 1952.

I wish to refer to this in our Volume III of the Battle for Leyte Gulf, and I should like to know what the name of the book is and also what "Manichi Shimbun Sha" is. I presume this later Japanese is a publishing house.

I should also like to know where the publishing house is; i.e., Tokyo, etc.

Captain Gimber will be down there presently--I hope he sees you.

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0587

1 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

In looking over SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd No.4 (possibly No. 85) -- shown as SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 211458 in ZUIHO War Diary (WDC Document 161636), and also in ZHIHO Detailed Action Report (WDC Document 161008) -- I note that paragraph 1(b) discusses the SUISEI Unit in order and arrangement of searches as follows:

"1(b) SUISEI Unit (base point - GARAN BI, return point - NICHOLS Field):

- (1) F-30; search radius 480 miles.
- (2) 175°; search radius 500 miles.
- (3) 155°; search radius 400 miles.
- (4) 158°; search radius 400 miles."

This does not seem to be correct. F-30 is apparently 147½° which would mean that item (2) (175°) is probably in error. If we assume that 155° and 158° are correct, then 175° was more likely 151½° or thereabouts.

Can you give this the once-over? Possibly all four items are correct. Perhaps you can find another version in some other report.

Captain Gimber is down there today, and I hope that he has the good fortune of seeing you before he departs your area.

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 (Op-292)  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0588

2 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

In the 61st Air Flotilla War Diary (WDC Document 161643, NA 12260) there is some question in regard to the translation (which, by the way, was made by Mr. Kawakami) of CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 221612 October 1944 to All Fleet and Squadron Commanders SW Area Fleet, etc.

This question arises from the fact that in Paragraph 1 (of the dispatch) it talks about "identification of shipping east of the Philippines", and in Paragraph 2 it refers to the "period from 1200 24 October until a suitable time, it is requested that our air and ground units in the operating area of 2 YB in the Philippines be directed to attack only carriers and transports and to refrain from attacking other surface ships except where positively identified as an enemy task force".

I would appreciate it if you would check this translation because it seems to me that the translation of Paragraph 2 above referred to is in error where it refers to the operating area of 2 YB in the Philippines--could this have been 1 YB or perhaps 1 YB and 2 YB, or was it something else entirely? Certainly, there were no Allied carriers in Central Philippine waters.

I hope things are going well with you and that the young heir to the "Tanaka Millions"--at least "millions of yen"--is growing in health and radiance.

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 OP-292  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0589

3 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

You may be surprised at the way I keep hammering away at you but I am working on the Japanese operations for October 22nd and, every now and then, I find something that isn't clear. Therefore, it is my hope that, in your research there, you may have already run across what I may happen to be seeking.

At the present moment I am looking for SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd No. 88, issued at 2000 October 22nd, and received by the 701st Air Group at 0940 October 23rd. The heading of this dispatch, found in the War Diary 701st Air Group (October 1st-31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592), is on Page 27 of the above war diary.

I am also interested in 14th Combined Air Group Dispatch 230005 October 1944, addressed to the SIXTH Base Air Force Battle Addressees, SMS 230005, General Battle Report of October 22nd, and located in the War Diary 701st Air Group (same as above) on Page 27.

Any other of those dispatches on that same page which you feel you might have and which have not already been translated, I should appreciate having something on.

With best regards again, and with hopes that I will see you when I am down there next week, I am, as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 Op-292  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0590

5 October 1956

Dear Captain Davis:

In accordance with my statement to Captain Hartman some time ago, the Naval War College has now forwarded to the Chief of Naval Personnel the request that consideration be given once again to retaining Chief Quartermaster Trembath in his present billet in the Naval War College.

As you perhaps know, and I feel quite sure I wrote this to Captain Hartman, I talked to Admiral Yeager about this matter when I was last in Washington and Admiral Yeager said he would approve anything you recommended. That, in itself, is very nice, but what are you going to recommend?

In this connection, I am reminded of what Admiral John C. Daniel (now ComDesLant and formerly in the billet now occupied by Admiral Yeager) said to me some months ago. He said that (a) when they knew I was coming to Washington, they made plans to defend their positions, but, invariably, I "sold" them, and (b) "We never gave you anything you didn't rate, you got it because you should have had it", and (c) "I have no doubt that the Bureau will act in the same manner in the future". Based on this concept, I do not feel very badly about Trembath because I feel sure that you visualize the problems which I have here. I am anxious to finish these books--more anxious than you can imagine--and I need some permanence of personnel.

Trembath has been extremely helpful in this regard as he is alert, retentive in memory, and unusually cooperative in every way.

I will be in Washington on Tuesday and Wednesday of next week, after which time I hope to return to Newport with an agreement on Trembath. I also hope to see Admiral Yeager.

Captain Nutting was here yesterday and I talked this matter over with him. I am sure he is as convinced as I am of the wisdom of a decision to retain Trembath.

0591

5 October 1956

Outside of that, the Naval War College is operating beautifully under Admiral Robbins, and I feel sure that everyone is satisfied that his appointment was very wise.

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Captain R. P. Davis, USN  
Room 6841  
Bureau of Naval Personnel  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0592

9 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

Thank you for calling my attention to the review in THE REPORTER by Dr. Louis Morton of the Willoughby-Chamberlain book on MacArthur. It was in the issue of November 4, 1954. I had previously skimmed through the book and had much the same reaction as Dr. Morton to the unfortunate fact that MacArthur's biographies do that great man a disservice when they insist on his infallibility and perfection even if they have to twist the facts to do so. The other officers in the section have also read the review with much interest. When the Commodore returns from Washington, I shall show it to him.

I mentioned to Admiral Eller the significance of the Japanese documents now in this country and have also written a brief note about them to a classmate of mine, RADM L. P. Ramage, who, as a special assistant to CNO, may be in a position to forestall their premature release. Your interest in their retention for research purposes has therefore been relayed upward.

Sincerely yours,

H.M.S. GIMBER, Jr.

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 (Op-292)  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0593

16 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

First, I want to thank you and your husband for looking out for me in Washington. I appreciate my little trip with you and I was interested in your remarks. I hope that all of these problems will clear up. Very frankly, I don't know why you are over in Alexandria now, but I have reason to believe that it is because they want to develop you into a researcher, which will make it much easier for you to perhaps hold on for a long time. I spoke to Admiral Eller about this with the hope that he could hold you.

New subject. As you perhaps know, we have never found CinC Combined Fleet's orders for setting up the SHO One operation. We have a lot of information about it and we have drawn our conclusions about it largely from Admiral Ozawa's OpOrd No. 76 of September 10th, 1944 (NACHI Document). We know, in general, all of the characteristics of this order (CinC Combined Fleet's) and we have written the books accordingly.

However, a point is coming up at this moment which requires a little more special knowledge of the order. That matter is this: Under the SHO plan, the naval air forces (that is, the FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces) were to launch, commencing D-1 day and continuing through D-day (October 24th - 25th, 1944), strong offensive air strikes against the enemy with the Navy going after the carriers largely, the Army after the shipping largely in the Leyte area.

I would like to find the coordinating instructions which specify how this was to be done. It seems to me that these would be contained in the original SHO orders from the Army and Navy Sections of the Imperial General Headquarters.

If you can find anything on this, I would appreciate it. This would be in addition to the Army - Navy Central Agreement.

With best regards to you and yours, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka

0594



16 October 1956

P.S.

Don't forget to translate RADM Koyanagi's new book. We already have Koyanagi's "The Battle of Leyte Gulf" - A Retrospection" which was translated by Ohmae and edited by Pineau. Our number is G-JAR S(#33).

R.W. BATES

0595

U. S. NAVAL AIR DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
JOHNSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
17 October 1956

Head, World War II Battle Eval. Grp.  
U.S. Naval War College  
Newport, R. I.

My dear Commodore Bates:

My apologies for the delay in answering your letter of 4 September concerning tracks flown and sightings made on the night of 24th - 25th October 1944 by myself, Lieutenant Moskaluk and Lieutenant Sillers. The delay was caused by my writing a friend in Oregon whom I believed held the address of one WARD TANZER who is in possession of the chart I used on the flight of 24th - 25th October 1944. WARD TANZER was a Lieutenant, USNR from the Navy Department, attached to Patrol Squadron Thirty-Four (VP-34) in 1944 for the purpose of making a motion picture and writing a story on "Black-Cat" operations in the Southwest Pacific.

In the latter part of 1945 TANZER came to my home in Jacksonville, Florida and "borrowed" the chart to use in the last chapter of a book he was supposed to have been writing for the Navy Department. That was the last contact I had with TANZER and the chart. At that time he was still a Lieutenant in the USNR.

I tell you the above story in hopes that maybe you can officially trace his present location through the Navy Department.

My friend in Oregon gave me TANZER's father's address:

2030 Merced  
Fresno, California

Maybe by writing Mr. WARD R. TANZER at the above address the letter would be forwarded to him.

I have drawn on the enclosed plate what I believe was my track (red). Lieutenant Moskaluk flew south (blue) but my memory fails me on the exact track he flew, and Lieutenant Sillers flew north, I believe east of Samar. The elapsed time on my flight was 10.7 hours. My radar went out shortly after passing over Admiral Olendorf's ships that were steaming for the Surigao Straits and I visually sighted one cruiser, believed at the time

0596

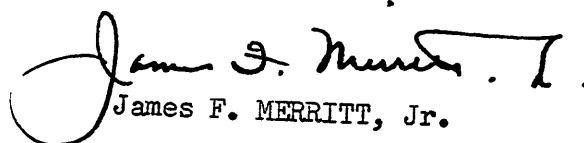
to be Jap, heading about 070° M, 30 knots, position south of SE tip of BOHOL, estimated time 2130. I could sight no more ships visually at this time. Radio silence had been ordered unless entire Jap Fleet sighted. My radar was working again at the southern tip of NEGROS Island and for the remainder of the flight. I sighted several Jap Merchant ships in harbors along east coast of PALAWAN. Next morning approximately 0330 radar reported several planes overtaking on port beam one half mile, position at this time was east of Island located between BOHOL and southwest tip Leyte. I flew behind these planes around southern tip of Leyte into "Battle of Surigao Straits", estimated time 0420. I was fired on by both friendly and enemy but escaped damage. Lieutenant Moskaluk made the same mistake a few minutes later and his plane was severely damaged and sank on landing in Leyte Harbor. No injuries in either plane. To the best of my memory Lieutenant Moskaluk sighted only merchantmen.

I realize this has been much rambling but I put it all down not knowing what little point might be important to you. I feel sure the chart I used has all the data marked on it and I believe the tracks flown by Lieutenant Moskaluk and Lieutenant Sillers are also shown.

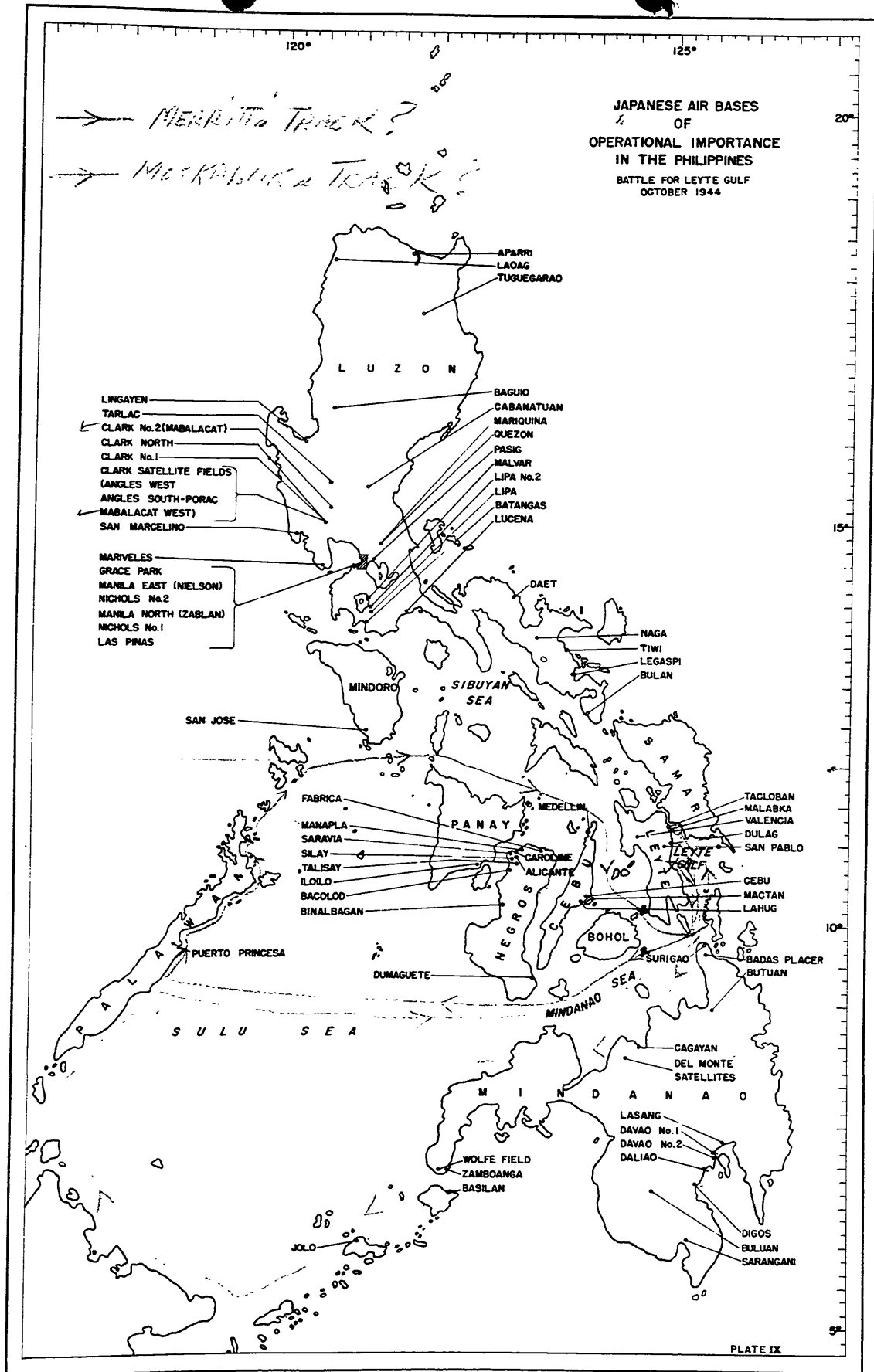
I hope that the above will be of some assistance in your study. If I can be of any help in the future I shall be more than happy to assist in any way that I can. My address after 7 December 1956 will be:

U.S.S. FLOYDS BAY (AVP-40)  
c/o Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

Very respectfully,

  
James F. MERRITT, Jr.

0597



0598

18 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

Some strange thing has come to pass in the case of a translation of some remarks of General Yamashita in early October 1944.

I have three translations (which are forwarded herewith as enclosures to this letter and labeled): one, which I will refer to as Translation A is entered into my book; Translation B is given in Colonel Hattori's History of the Greater East Asia War, Volume III, which you translated for me on 5 January 1954; and then we have Translation C which is out of the FOURTEENTH Area Army Operations which translation we received from the Army Historical Division.

It is surprising how different these translations really are but, even more surprising is this: I cannot discover where I found Translation A above referred to and which I have in my book (the footnote reference is to Colonel Hattori but when I look at Translation B there is a marked difference in the wording and even in the number of words--particularly in paragraph 3).

For example, Hattori's history has a final line in paragraph 3 to the effect that, "The new plan which has little possibility of success and which carries with it a threat of overturning, etc.". This particular line is entirely missing in both Translations A and C.

It is my firm belief that you were asked to determine which of these translations was correct and came up with what I refer to as Translation A.

Translations A and B are quite similar in the first two paragraphs with the exception of the word, "suddenly" in paragraph 2.

I would appreciate learning the correct translation of this as I want the book to be right.

Perhaps you have still another version. Colonel Hattori was in the Philippines at this time but so also were Colonel Sugita, Deputy Chief of Staff, and Lt. Gen. Hata, Chief of Operations (all from Imperial General Headquarters).

0599

18 October 1956

To show you how the Army has used this, if you will take the Army's book, "Leyte: The Return to the Philippines", page 93, you will see that, at the bottom of this page, the writing infers that General Yamashita approved of this whole thing which he most certainly did not.

The truth of the matter is that General Yamashita was opposed to fighting on Leyte in other than limited warfare and desired to fight the whole major battle on Luzon giving as argument the material contained in the Translations A, B and C.

I don't want to be accused of this practice!

I hope that we are not asking too much of you.

With best regards to you and yours, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 Op-292  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0600

19 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

In reviewing what I have written on October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1944, I have come across some Army disagreements in the accounts of events. The sequence of events seem to be about as follows:

a. On October 20th the Imperial General Headquarters (Army Section) Tokyo decided to fight for Leyte with the total ground forces. This was a change from the original plan to fight on Luzon with total ground forces but to defend Leyte with only the limited ground forces in the area.

b. According to the Army Historical Division volume-- "Leyte: The Return to the Philippines" (Page 103)--and also according to the Record of THIRTY-FIFTH Army Operations 1944 - 1945 (Japanese Studies in WW II, GHQ, FEC, Historical Section, G-2, File No. 8-5, JS-11), page 31, it states that, on October 21st, the C.G. 14th Area Army issued the order "SHO ICHI GO" and states that the substance of this was that "the Japanese army with the total force of the air force and navy would annihilate the enemy landing on Leyte Island".

c. (1) The 14th Area Army (Japanese Studies in WW II, GHQ, FEC, Historical Section, G-2, File 8-5, JS-7, page 5) infers that the order from the Southern Army to carry out decisive battle was issued on the 20th and refers to a different order issued on the 21st by C.G. 14th Area Army to C.G. 35th Army.

(2) Colonel Hattori's "History of the Greater East Asia War", Volume III, discusses all this business and then says (on page 3), "On October 22nd, Marshal Terauchi summoned General Yamashita, and making known to him his decision to direct decisive battle for ground forces on Leyte, sought to reach an understanding", and further that, "also, on the same day, Southern Army issued the following order:

- '1. The time has come to destroy the arrogant enemy.
- '2. 14th Area Army will cooperate with air and naval forces and destroy the enemy attacking Leyte, employing the greatest possible strength.'

0601

19 October 1956

From this, you can see that the picture is confused. I don't know who is right. However, the sequence of events should probably have been about as follows:

The Imperial General Headquarters, on the 20th, decided to fight on Leyte with total ground forces and so notified CinC Southern Army. CinC Southern Army then notified C.G. 14th Area Army on the 20th of this decision. (It will be recalled that both of the above commanders were in Manila.) Then, on the 21st, C.G. 14th Area Army issued his "SHO ICHI GO" order.

Now, besides the dates above, the point at issue is this: What was the wording of the "SHO ICHI GO" order?

Colonel Hattori gives a quote (mentioned above--subpara c(2)) which he said was issued on the 22nd. The wording of this seems to be the same wording that 35th Army says was received on the 21st (on page 31). Could it be that Colonel Hattori was one day off and the message referred to in the quote above ("1. The time has come to destroy the arrogant enemy...etc") is actually the "SHO ICHI GO" order? If that is true, the rest of the picture is clear for, although C.G. 14th Area Army had issued the "SHO ICHI GO" order, he didn't believe in it and continued to argue about it so that either CinC Southern Army, on October 22nd, called him over and told him to "get on the ball" as it were--this is Colonel Hattori's version--or he came over to see CinC Southern Army on his own on October 23rd as indicated by General Nishimura and was told to "get on the ball".

The reason for the difficulty here is that C.G. 14th Area Army's report appears to have been made up from memory; Colonel Hattori's was probably made up the same way; and the C.G. 35th Army Report was made up of facts and "recollections". Therefore, all of them could be out a day or so.

This is a problem which you may be easily able to handle by looking up the "Operations of the Southern Army" which we don't have here, but which might give the wording of the "SHO ICHI GO" order in a little more correct version of the story and the correct date. In the Army publication, "Leyte: The Return to the Philippines", Page 385, there is mentioned a "History of the Southern Army, 1941 - 45 (apparently, Japanese Study No. 21).

0602



19 October 1956

Anything you can solve of this will be appreciated.

How goes it otherwise?

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 Op-292  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0603

25 October 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

I don't like to bother you so frequently, but I want to keep the record straight.

I should like to invite your attention to Detailed Action Report COMCRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

On page 1 of this action report, it refers to the 1st Transport Unit as consisting of Transports 6, 9, and 10; the 2nd Transport Unit as consisting of Transports 101 and 102.

On page 3 of this action report, it announces that the 1st Transport Unit was under the command of the senior ship captain (Transport 10) and infers that Transports 6, 9 (and 10) were in the 1st Transport Unit. It refers, on this same page, to the 2nd Transport Unit under the command of the senior ship captain (Transport No. 101) and refers also to Transport 102.

Then, on page 13, there is quoted SW Area Force Dispatch 1320 of 22 October 1944 and the addressees are given as, among others, Transports 9, 10, 6 and 102.

It will be observed that Transport 101 is missing in the addressees, and under the contents of the dispatch it says (in paragraph 1) "Transports 101 and 6 will depart Manila Harbor at a convenient time on 22 Oct and will proceed to Cagayan, arriving there by evening of 24 Oct." And, in paragraph 2, it says "Transports 9 and 10, after completing current assignments at Cebu will proceed to Cagayan by evening of 24 Oct under command of senior ship captain."

I don't know whether these translations by Mr. Kawakami are correct or whether, somehow the whole thing is fouled up, for, as pointed out above, Transport 101 is not mentioned in the addressees and Transport 102 is not mentioned in the order. It seems to me that the correct translation should be based on this action report and in the first paragraph it should say "Transports 101 and 102 will depart Manila Harbor...." and in the second paragraph it should say "Transports 6, 9 and 10 after completing current assignments.....".

0604

25 October 1956

I would appreciate it if you would look at this translation again (of this dispatch) to see if it isn't possible that paragraph 1 was, in fact, Transports 101 and 102 and in paragraph 2, Transports 6, 9 and 10. This seems so for the former transports only made eleven knots whereas Transport 6 made sixteen knots and Transports 9 and 10 made about 18 knots (See CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 212211 in the same CRUDIV 16 action report).

It is not customary to sail high speed ships with low speed ships if avoidable.

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

P. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 (Op-292)  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0605



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

Op-29/pam

5 Nov 1956

RADM R.W. Bates, USN (Ret.)  
Naval War College  
Newport  
Rhode Island

Dear Rafe:

Separately, in an official letter, we notified you that we have downgraded your dispatches to Confidential. As you can see, we have taken the bull by the horn and sought to expedite matters by downgrading three dispatches that we should rightfully have sent out into the Pacific. If CINCPAC approves this procedure, we should have no difficulty expediting the downgrading of <sup>such</sup> ~~such~~ groups.

I hope to see you in early December.

Best wishes,

  
E. M. ELLER

0606

9 November 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

In the Action Report of the FIRST Striking Force (SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839), it refers to Dispatch 220700 October 1944 (FIRST Striking Force DesOpOrd No. 57).

The only translation we have of this particular dispatch is one by Captain Rochefort. Since this dispatch is based on DesOpOrd No. 4 (a written order), it clearly should embrace most of the characteristics of the 'supply department' of that DesOpOrd.

Captain Rochefort's translation, based on the above concept, is incomplete. Therefore, I would appreciate it very much if you would look over the Detailed Action Report of the FIRST Striking Force and translate DesOpOrd No. 57 in full.

Outside of that, how goes it in Arlington?

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 Op-292  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0607

9 November 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

I find it necessary to request your services again, although I am convinced that the task in point is one which you will be able to discharge with little effort.

I am quite interested in the War Diary of the NICHIEI MARU (October 1st-31st, 1944, WDC Document 160148, NA 11838).

We have this translated by you up to October 19th. I wonder if we could have it translated for the following week? This is important because information concerning the location of these tankers was of great importance to the Japanese commanders.

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 (Op-292)  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0608

9 November 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

While working on the Operations of the FIRST Striking Force as they sortied from Brunei Bay on October 22nd, 1944, I looked into Mr. Kawakami's translation of the Detailed Action Report DESRON 10 (Detailed Action Report No. 10, October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744). To my surprise, I found that he had translated it only through the 21st of October 1944.

I need the translation of DESRON 10 ~~through~~ 21st through the 27th of October. I should like to know if I can have this document translated.

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Lily Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231 Op-292  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0609



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

12 November 1957

ADMIRAL R. W. BATES  
Head, World War II Battle Evaluation Group  
U. S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

Dear Admiral Bates:

I am in receipt of your letter of 5 November regarding ammunition on-board PENNSYLVANIA at the time of sortie for Leyte Gulf and ammunition expenditures during that phase of the Philippine Campaign.

I was deeply concerned by your statement that Captain Martin appeared "to have joined his Maker". I investigated and find that he apparently is in excellent health and living at 3219 Hayward Street, Columbia, South Carolina.

I feel that it would be usurping his prerogative were I to answer your letter directly to you.

Accordingly, I have forwarded the first page of your letter to him with such comments as I deemed appropriate, to be used by him, in response to your inquiries. I should be most happy to communicate directly with you and your group should any future occasion for such arise. In instant case I suggest that you communicate directly with Admiral Martin.

Very respectfully,

C. A. BURCH  
Captain, USN

0610





WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

14 November 1955

Dear Commodore,

It was nice to see you the other day and thank you for your note of the 7th.

In regard to Captains Gimber and Titus, it is our desire, and of course dependent on the wishes of the Naval War College, that they remain in their present assignments for at least another year. As long as they are producing good work for you, I feel that they should remain where they are in the best interests of all concerned. Unless we hear more from you on this subject, you may consider this matter closed as far as we are concerned.

I discussed the case of QMC Trembath with our people here and although there is considerable reluctance toward allowing him to remain for such a long time, it was decided that he should continue status quo for another year also. Since his tour of duty on shore will be becoming inordinately lengthy, it may not be possible to keep on extending his tour with you. Therefore, I would suggest that you keep your eye out for a possible relief for him after his completion of another year with you.

Rest assured we are always doing our very best to assist the Naval War College in its personnel matters.

With very best regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

*M. F. D. Flaherty*  
M. F. D. FLAHERTY  
Captain, U. S. Navy

Commodore R. W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

0611

15 November 1956

Dear Mrs. Tanaka:

With Thanksgiving Day nearing so rapidly, I am now giving thanks that you are down there so that I can refer matters to you as they arise.

I am interested in Chief of Staff Combined Fleet Dispatch 221612 October 1944 (Copy attached), found in the 61st Air Flotilla War Diary, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

This dispatch, which by the way was translated by Mr. Kawakami, is addressed to "All Fleet & Squadron Cdrs, Southwest Area Fleet & 2AF (Info to 1 AF, 3 AF, 6 P)".

I would appreciate it very much if you would re-check this heading (addressees) because it seems more likely that this dispatch was addressed to "All Fleet & Squadron Cdrs, Combined Fleet" rather than "All Fleet & Squadron Cdrs, Southwest Area Fleet".

In addition, I am interested in paragraph two of this same dispatch wherein it says, "During the period from 1200 24 Oct until a suitable time, it is requested that our air and ground units in the operating area of 2YB in the Philippines be directed to attack . . .". Could that have been 1YB and 2YB? I cannot see why it is only 2YB, excepting this: 2YB was under Southwest Area Fleet.

With best regards, and with best wishes for a happy Thanksgiving, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Mrs. Ely Y. Tanaka  
Room 1231, Op-292  
Main Navy Building  
Navy Department  
Washington 25, D.C.

0612